Radon Testing Protocols for Iowa Child Care Centers

TESTING PLACEMENT

1. Which rooms in a child care center should be tested for radon?

Test the lowest level <u>program room or space the children will use</u> (except bathrooms, laundry and kitchen) regardless of contact with the soil.

Test every level in contact with the soil in every <u>program room or space the children will use</u> (except bathrooms, laundry and kitchen).

If the results are below the 4.0 pCi/L threshold, there is no need to test program space <u>directly</u> above the level tested.

Note: If any program room or space extends beyond the tested lower level and that space is in contact with the soil, additional testing of this space is required as well. Example: split levels or partial basements that are not as large as the lower tested area.

2. Which areas do NOT need to be tested for radon?

Kitchens, storage areas, laundry areas and bathrooms do not need to be tested.

3. If the entire basement is used as a storage area and is not used by children, does it need to be tested?

No.

4. What about buildings with crawlspaces?

If the building has a crawlspace, <u>program room or space the children will use</u> above the crawlspace should be tested. The crawlspace itself does not need to be tested.

5. If a program area has tested below the threshold and is not in contact with the soil, is it necessary to test the space <u>directly</u> above that area?

No.

6. How many tests should be used in each program area?

Due to the potential complexity of construction of child care centers, each room should be tested with a separate device. Most short-term tests cover up to 2000 ft². Classroom/program areas under 2000 ft² will need only one device. If the room is over 2000 ft², additional devices will need to be used.

7. In a room over 2000 ft² which requires the use of two devices, how should the devices be placed? If two devices are used, divide the room in half, and place each device in the center of each half.

TEST RESULTS

8. What if the test is above 4.0 pCi/L?

If a childcare center has a test reading above 4.0 from a short-term test-kit, it is recommended to conduct additional testing.

If the result of the initial test is 4.0-7.9 pCi/L, it is recommended to conduct a long-term test using an alpha track detector.

If the result of the initial test is greater than or equal to 8.0 pCi/L, it is recommended to conduct a follow-up short-term test.

If the center has multiple classrooms and only a few results are above 4.0pCi/L, only those with radon levels above 4.0 piC/L need to be re-tested.

NOTE: The decision to mitigate should *not* be made based on one elevated result. Follow-up testing should always be done prior to installing a mitigation system.

9. What other conditions require re-testing?

Any type of remodeling, HVAC work, or structural and/or air handling work should be followed by retesting the program room or space for radon after the work has been completely finished.

In general, it is recommended to test buildings every 2 years.

MITIGATION

Per IDPH Administrative Rules, only licensed radon mitigation specialists are permitted to install radon mitigation systems. For a listing of licensed radon mitigation specialists, consult the list located on IDPH's Radon Program website: http://www.idph.state.ia.us/Radon/Fix.aspx.

10. If a child care center already has a mitigation system installed and it is working properly, is testing necessary?

Yes. To ensure that the system is functioning properly and that levels remain below 4.0 pCi/L, further testing is recommended. In addition, mitigation contractors should have provided an operating manual when the system was installed, as well as their contact information and company name.

11. Is there any other method to make sure that the system is functioning properly?

Yes. Each mitigation system is equipped with a manometer. The manometer shows the level of suction created by the fan on the system. A properly functioning fan will show an uneven level of liquid on the two sides, showing that pressure is entering the tube.



ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

Test kits can be purchased locally at many county health departments or by calling Iowa's Radon Hotline: 1-800-383-5992.

Winter months are the best time to test in Iowa because closed-building conditions can be easily maintained.

Be sure to follow the conditions and special instructions on each test kit.

OTHER RESOURCES

US Environmental Protection Agency: www.epa.gov

Iowa Department of Public Health (IDPH): http://www.idph.state.ia.us/Radon/

IDPH Radon Program

Rick Welke 515-281-4928 or <u>Richard.welke@idph.iowa.gov</u> Mindy Uhle 515-242-6131 or <u>Melinda.uhle@idph.iowa.gov</u>

The Iowa AIR Coalition is a group of county and city officials trained in radon measurement and education. The steering committee member who represents your county may be able to assist you or direct you to additional resources:



Region 1- Curt Coghlan, Warren County

Region 2- Misty Kroeze, Butler County

Region 3- Kim Johnson, Buena Vista County

Region 4- Mike Sukup, Mills County

Region 5- Cory Frank, Marion County

Region 6/Co-Chair- Ruby Perin, Linn County

curtc@co.warren.ia.us

mkroeze@butlercoiowa.org

kjohnson@bvcountyiowa.com

MikeS@mcph.us

cfrank@marionph.org

ruby.perin@linncounty.org